

tax penalty is such a priority. We have answered the call for bringing fairness to the tax code by making the centerpiece of the legislation this House is going to vote on tomorrow legislation which will eliminate for a majority of those 28 million married working couples paying the marriage tax penalty, will eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

In fact, I have an example here of a machinist and a school teacher in Joliet, Illinois. They live in the south suburbs. They have a combined income of \$50,000. Currently under our tax code, because the standard deduction for joint filers, for married couples, is now twice what it is for a single, if you figure in their personal exemptions and then give them the standard deduction when they file jointly, that standard deduction currently is only \$6,900. If we want to be fair about it, the standard deduction for a joint filer should always be twice what it is for single filers. We do that in the tax package we are going to vote on tomorrow. The result is for this machinist and this school teacher in Joliet, Illinois, with a standard deduction now of \$8,500, twice what it is for a single person, they will see a net benefit of \$240 in higher take-home pay as a result of our efforts to eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

Now, we eliminate the marriage tax penalty for a majority of those married couples who suffer it by doubling the standard deduction. Not only is that an issue of bringing fairness to the tax code but because we double the standard deduction for married working couples, we also simplify the tax code. The reason we simplify the tax code, now as a result of doubling the standard deduction which 28 million married working couples will enjoy and benefit from, seeing an extra \$240 in higher take-home pay, that is an extra car payment, 6 million of those couples will no longer need to itemize. We are simplifying their taxes. In fact they will no longer need to use the Schedule A. All they will need now is just to use the 1040-EZ. That is simplification.

Now, the opponents, some of whom we have heard from this evening and who oppose our efforts to eliminate the marriage tax penalty for a majority of those who suffer it, they claim that somehow our effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty somehow will hurt and take money out of the Social Security trust fund. Now, there is an important question that was asked in the House Committee on Ways and Means this past week when we acted and produced our effort to save Social Security and eliminate the marriage tax penalty. We asked the representative, the Deputy Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, are those charges true? Is as a result of the tax cut being considered by the committee and of course voted on tomorrow, on Saturday, will there be any impact on the moneys in the Social Security trust fund? Judy Chessier, who is the Deputy Commissioner of the Social

Security Administration, had a very simple answer. Frankly for someone in the bureaucracy, it was very short, sweet and to the point. She said, "No." By saying "no," that means the Social Security trust fund is not impacted.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are going to vote on a tax package tomorrow that the centerpiece eliminates the marriage tax penalty for millions, in fact the majority of those who suffer it. This package is good because it helps married couples in Illinois, helps family farmers, helps small businesspeople, helps schools in Illinois and helps parents who want to send their kids off to college.

We can save Social Security. We can eliminate the marriage tax penalty. We have a good opportunity to do that tomorrow. It deserves bipartisan support. I urge bipartisan support for the Save Social Security Act which passed today as well as the 1998 Taxpayer Relief Act. Let us save Social Security. Let us eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

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#### CUT TAXES ONLY AFTER TRULY BALANCING THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I share with the previous Member the commitment to finding a way to reduce taxes. Really the question is, however, not do we have a commitment to reduce taxes and believe that the bill that has been brought up or will be brought up tomorrow is a fair bill in that respect. The question is the timing.

The previous speaker I think laid out quite clearly the issue, and that is to what extent are we selling a phony package to the American people by saying to them we have a surplus and we can balance the budget and go through a tax cut, without somehow compromising our commitment to stay the course and not add to our Nation's debt and not make it more difficult to solve the Social Security problems in the future?

The simple answer is, we do not have a balanced budget. We are borrowing this year approximately \$104 billion from the Social Security trust fund. This money is going into the general fund and supporting Federal programs.

We are going to have a deficit of approximately \$70 billion this year, an on-budget deficit of \$70 billion.

What does this mean? It means that we have not adequately planned for the future. We have not adequately planned for 1998, and we are proposing a tax cut when we have not balanced the budget. I think this is tragic.

It also points up the fact that we do not yet even have a budget for the next fiscal year, and this too is tragic. Here we are, we are five months and 24 days past the deadline for having a budget

agreement in Congress, and we do not yet have one. The House and the Senate have not agreed. No budget resolution.

We do not have guidance for the Committee on Appropriations, we do not have guidance for the Committee on Ways and Means. The committees are free-lancing it. The Committee on Ways and Means has come out with a tax cut package. They do not know how it fits into a budget, because we do not have a budget. And here we are in this chamber saying to state and local government, act responsibly. Act fiscally responsibly, so when we grant you money, we know and you know that you are properly budgeting for your operations.

We say to the United Nations, act fiscally responsibly; prepare a budget. We do not have a budget.

We say to nonprofit entities and others that apply for Federal grants, have a budget. Show us your budget. We do not have a budget.

This is a very, very unfortunate situation. The leadership in this body and on the other end of the building have not even appointed conferees to agree on what a budget resolution should look like and bring it back to each chamber for a vote. We have a failure of leadership. We need to address the question of what is the Federal budget to be for 1999, and we are only six days away from the beginning of the next fiscal year. No budget.

I submit that the tax cut package, as attractive as it is and as much as we all would like to vote on it and go back home and beat our chest and say what wonderful Members of Congress we are, the tax cut package ought to be deferred in terms of its implementation until the leadership in this body has developed a budget for the next fiscal year and until we know that we have eliminated the scourge of the deficit spending that has haunted this government.

We cannot afford to add to the deficit. We cannot afford to add to the debt. I know from talking to my friends and neighbors at home that they are all for tax cuts, but they also recognize that we have to act responsibly, and they want us to make sure we balance the budget first, and they want us to make sure we stop borrowing from Social Security.

We are continuing to do that, and this is going to handicap our ability to fix the Social Security program, because all of that borrowing goes right into the U.S. Treasury and we are postponing the day of reckoning.

#### SHORTFALLS IN FUNDING FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I talked yesterday about the problems with national security that are now becoming